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Prevention of armed conflict

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Letter dated 7 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon the instructions of my Government, I am writing to draw your attention to the persistent alarming situation on the Line of Contact between Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan. Despite the calls of the international community to strictly commit to the 1994 ceasefire regime, halt the hostilities and return to the negotiating table, Azerbaijan continues to resort to military actions along the Line of Contact.

To date, the Azerbaijani armed forces have continuously attacked the positions of the Nagorno Karabakh Defence Army and civilian settlements with heavy artillery, mortars, multiple rocket launching systems and tanks. Since the halting of major hostilities at the beginning of April, the Nagorno Karabakh Defence Army has suffered a further 10 casualties as a result of military actions by the armed forces of Azerbaijan. The village of Mataghis and the town of Martakert in Nagorno Karabakh have been continuous targets of indiscriminate shelling by tanks and heavy artillery. I attach images of the inflicted damage (see annex I).

Particularly disturbing are the tactics employed by the armed forces of Azerbaijan of moving their positions within their own civilian settlements, from where they are then able to attack both military and civilian targets in Nagorno Karabakh. I attach images of deployment of the armed forces of Azerbaijan in evidence of such abhorrent tactics by which, in violation of humanitarian law, their civilian population is used as a human shield (see annex II).

Presently, there remains a considerably high concentration of troops and military equipment of the armed forces of Azerbaijan along the Line of Contact, which renders the situation highly precarious and points to the continuation of the aggressive policy by Azerbaijan against Nagorno Karabakh. Thus, Azerbaijan bears full responsibility for the present situation and the risks of its further deterioration.

Furthermore, Azerbaijan continues to obstruct the activities of the team of the Personal Representative of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Chairman-in-Office, in particular obstructing the monitoring of both the Line of Contact between Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan and the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

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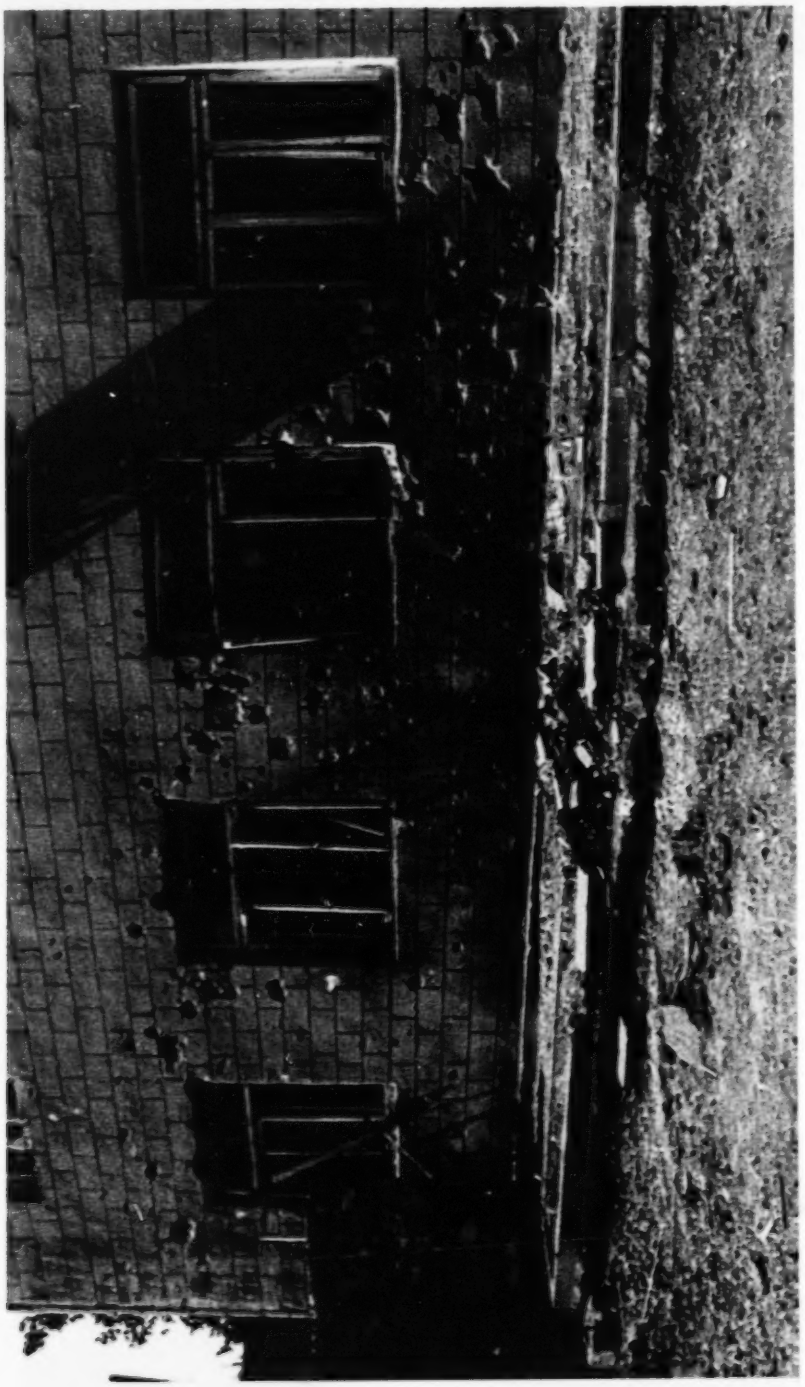
Today, it is imperative to preclude the future reoccurrence of what happened in the beginning of April and to ensure that the dangerous attempts to seek a military solution to the issue are effectively curbed. The implementation of the confidence-building measures proposed by the Co-Chairs will certainly serve that purpose, including the creation of the mechanism of investigation for the violations of the ceasefire and the capacity enhancement of the team of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office. It is also critical for the international community to urge Azerbaijan to strictly commit to the 1994 Trilateral Ceasefire Agreement between Nagorno Karabakh, Azerbaijan and Armenia and to the 1995 Trilateral Agreement on the Consolidation of Ceasefire.

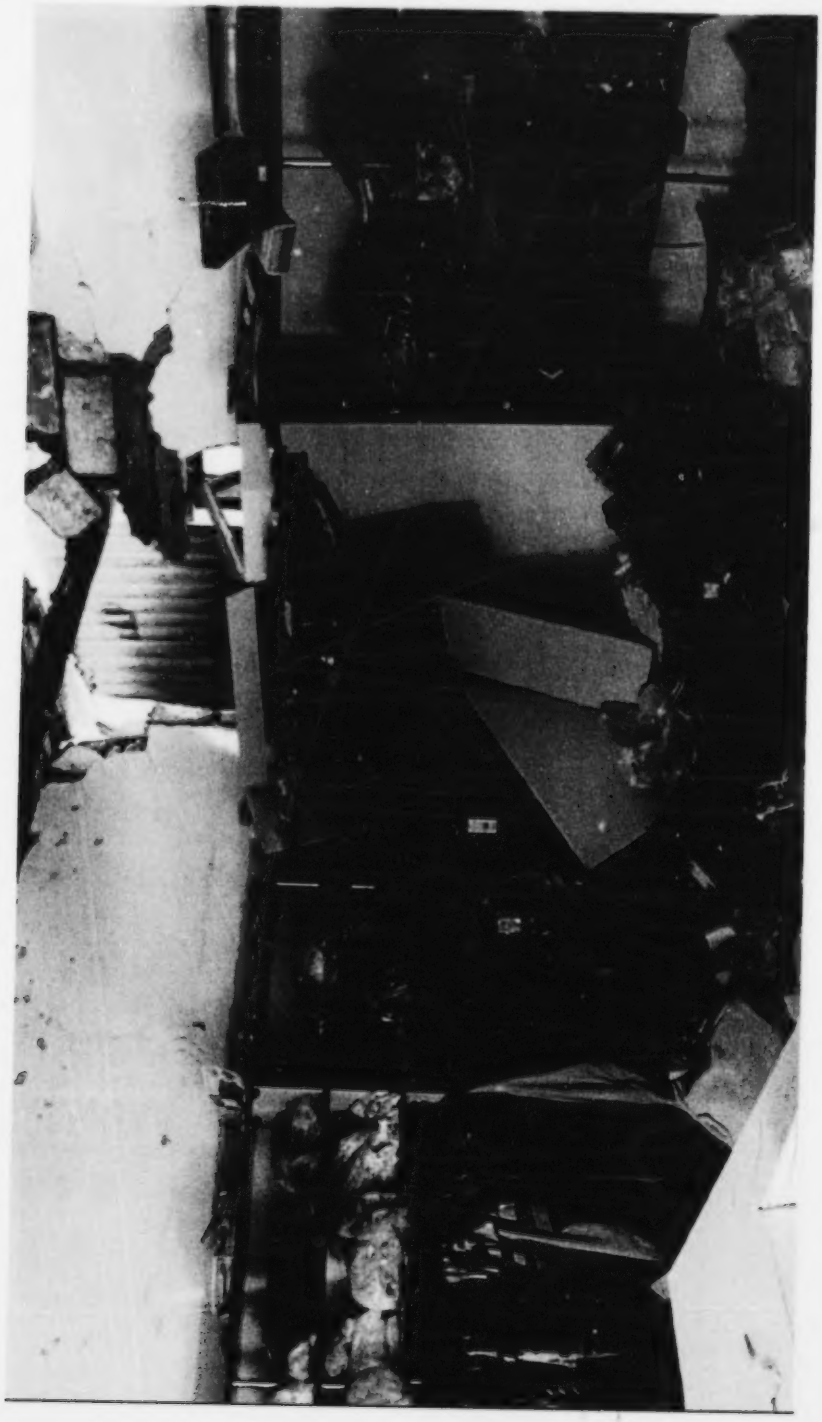
Such concrete steps could allow the restoration of the negotiation environment and continue the peace process, to which Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh remain wholly committed.

I kindly request that the present letter and the annexes thereto be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 34, and of the Security Council.

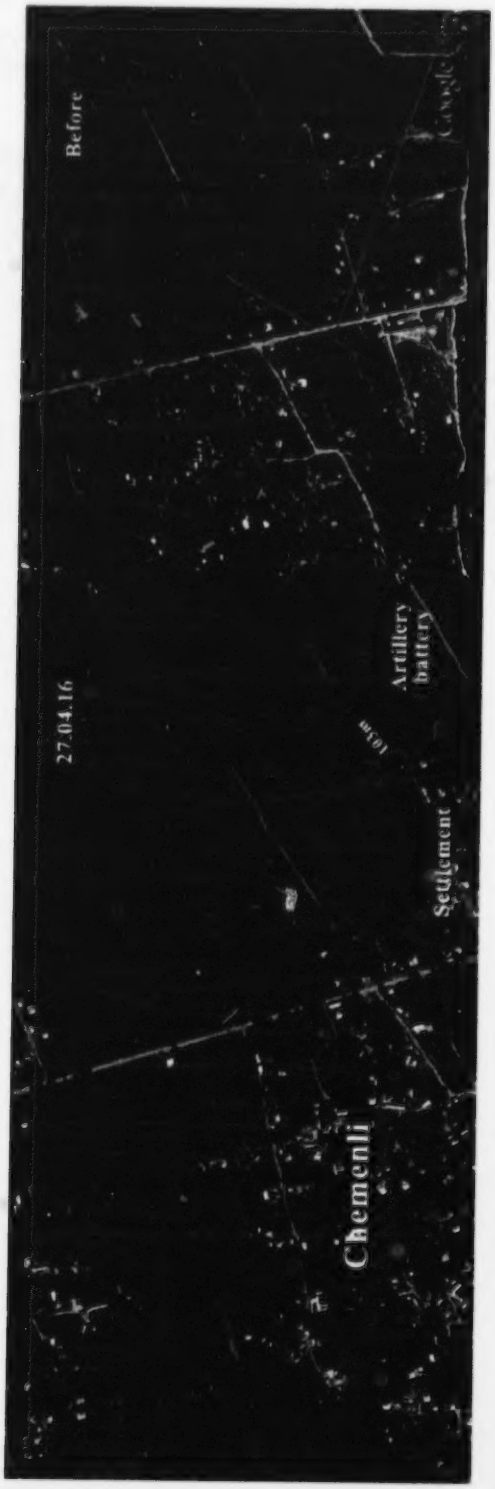
(*Signed*) Zohrab **Mnatsakanyan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex I to the letter dated 7 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General





Annex II to the letter dated 7 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General


Before
27.04.16
Artillery battery
Settlement
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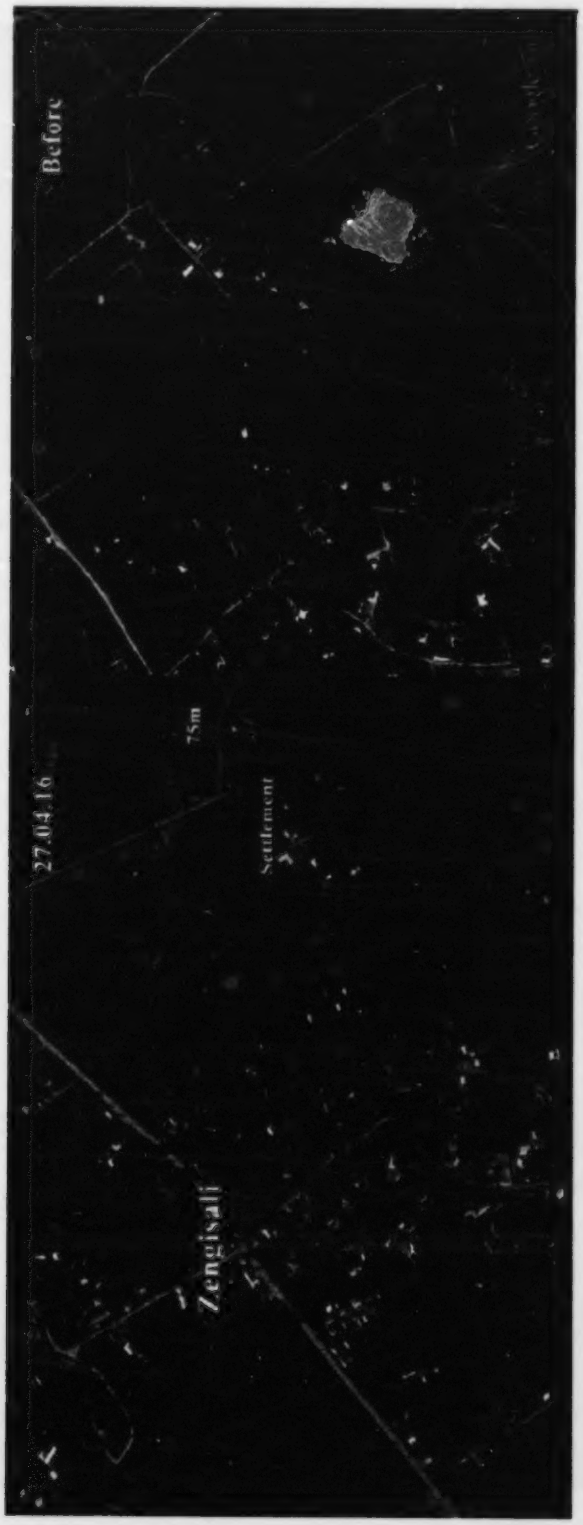
Before
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Zengisali

Artillary battery
97m
Settlement
Zengisali
Military installations of Azerbaijani Armed Forces located in close vicinity to populated settlements in violation of Customary IHL(Rule 23, Article 52, Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Convention)
Settlement
93m
Artillary battery

Artillery battery
75m
Zengisali
Artillery battery
75m
Settlement
Military installations of Azerbaijani Armed Forces located in close vicinity to populated settlements in violation of customary IHL (Rule 23, Article 52, Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Convention)